

May 2014

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Free downtown concert series continues May 29. See page 3.



Garner PD earns national reaccreditation See page 4.

TOWN HALL CALENDAR

May 20: Town Council meeting (7 p.m.)

May 27: Town Council work session (6 p.m.)

June 2: Town Council meeting with public hearing on proposed budget (7 p.m.)

Meetings are in the Council Chambers in building B at Town Hall, 900 Seventh Ave. Town Council regular meetings are recorded and broadcast (not live) on GTV 11 (Time Warner 11, AT&T U-verse 99).



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GARNER UPDATE

Vol. 65, No. 71



The Town's recommended fiscal year 2014-15 budget includes a proposed one-cent rate increase on the municipal property tax for public safety and emergency services.

Proposed Budget Includes One-Cent Tax Rate Hike

Council Still Mulling the Increase; Public Hearing June 2

The Town Manager's Office has released its recommended operating budget for fiscal year 2014-15. Copies were distributed to the Town Council at its work session on April 29. A public hearing on the budget was held during the May 5 Town Council meeting, and an additional public hearing will be held at the June 2 Council meeting at 7 p.m.

The recommended \$26.626 million budget – an increase of approximately \$865,000, or 3.4 percent, over the FY 2013-14 adopted budget – includes a proposed one-cent increase on the municipal property tax rate for public safety and emergency services. This proposal, as well as any other item in the budget, could change at the Town Council's discretion.

In FY 2014-15, approximately 50 percent of the proposed tax hike would support the hiring of three new firefighters and ensure that Garner residents continue to receive outstanding fire protection services from Garner Volunteer Fire & Rescue, Inc. (GVFR).

An additional 25 percent would be reserved for future emergency services needs such as the anticipated increase for funding a full year of additional firefighters and known future vehicle replacements. The remaining 25 percent would be used in FY 2014-15 for purchase of a much-needed backlog of equipment for the Garner Police Department. The Town anticipates that the entire

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Town publications are available online at garnernc.gov.



A Message from the Mayor



Watch the mayor's "Great People in Garner" on GTVII (Time Warner 11, AT&T 99) and on demand at garnernc.gov and youtube.com/townofgarner.

May is the month we remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. As in past years, Garner will honor the fallen—and



all veterans—at the annual Memorial Day observance. This year's will be Monday, May 26 at 1:30 p.m. near the Garner Veterans Memorial at Lake Benson Park.

Thanks to Garner citizen Tim Stevens (who helped make the

Broadway Voices series possible), Garner will also have its inaugural Garner Veterans Memorial Salute to the Troops on Sunday, May 18 at 6 p.m. at Aversboro Road Baptist Church (see next page for more details). This event is free and open to everyone. Veterans in particular are encouraged to attend.

May is also budget season for our Town government. The Town Council is mulling approval of the fiscal year 2014-15 budget and has a second (and final) public hearing on the budget slated for the Council

meeting on Monday, June 2 at 7 p.m. As the budget article in this newsletter indicates, you can read the proposed budget and other past budget documents at garnernc.gov/Departments/Finance/Default.aspx.

Our veterans have fought and died for our democracy, and local government is where democracy starts. I urge you to follow and engage your Town government.

Ronnie S. Williams

Ronnie S. Williams

Take Part in Special Olympics Torch Run

The Garner Police Department invites you to run with the Flame of Hope on Thursday, May 29 as part of the annual Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics North Carolina. Garner officers and others will run their leg of the relay—one of 15 across the state—from 400 Aversboro Road to



308 Tryon Road (three miles). The run will begin at 1 p.m.

For a \$25 donation, participants will receive a white Special Olympics North Carolina T-shirt. For a \$50 donation, participants will get an orange SONC running shirt and running hat.

To register, please contact Lauren Norman by May 26 at (919) 661-6983 or by email at lnorman@garnernc.gov. Money will be collected on the day of the run.

BUDGET

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one-cent increase would be used in FY 2015-16 to support GVFR.

This is the first proposed tax rate increase in seven years. For the average single-family home valuation in Garner – currently \$177,516 – the rate increase would mean an additional cost of \$17.75 annually.

Although property tax revenues are projected to increase 1.3 percent and sales tax revenues are projected to increase 6.65 percent next year, offsetting decreases are projected for beer and wine taxes, utility franchise taxes and grant revenues. Also, in FY 2013-14, the Town received an additional \$350,000 from Wake County for property tax collections (vehicles) that will not recur in future years.

It should be noted that although an array of residential and commercial construction projects are under way or have been approved, that new development is not yet taxable.

Numerous items in the proposed budget would improve the quality of services that the Town provides

to Garner residents. Some of those items include:

- Approximately \$137,000 for three new GVFR firefighters (to start January 2015) and some operational needs for GVFR;
- \$103,000 for a more proactive approach to fixing potholes and deteriorating Town-maintained streets;
- \$230,000 to replace the Town's aging street sweeper;
- \$40,000 to support conversion of all Town-owned streetlights to LEDs (annual savings in utility costs estimated at \$67,145);
- \$25,000 for a new Town website.

Copies of the recommended budget are available for review at Town Hall (900 Seventh Ave.) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and at the Wake County Southeast Regional Library (908 Seventh Ave.). The library is open Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Budget documents can also be found online at garnernc.gov/Departments/Finance/Default.aspx.



Inaugural Salute to Troops Coming May 18

The inaugural Garner Veterans Memorial Salute to the Troops will be filled with patriotic music, emotional images and a moving ceremony.

The celebration of all of our veterans will be held on Sunday, May 18 at 6 p.m. at Aversboro Road Baptist Church (1600 Aversboro Road). There is no admission charge, and all veterans in attendance will receive a gift from our community.

The Salute to the Troops will be led by Steve Amerson, who is known as America's tenor, and



Steve Amerson



Laurie Gayle Stephenson

Laurie Gayle Stephenson, a former Christine in Broadway's "Phantom of the Opera."

Amerson travels the country singing at Medal of Honor presentation ceremonies and at the funerals of

deceased Medal of Honor recipients. He is a recording artist who has sung in famed Carnegie Hall and with symphonies throughout the United States.

Stephenson made her Broadway debut in the Tony Award-winning "The Secret Garden," in which she performed the role of Lily. She starred for two years on Broadway as Christine Daae in Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Phantom of the Opera," and made her debut as Christine in "Phantom" with the first national touring company at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

MORE UPCOMING EVENTS



Garner Senior Center Hosts Annual Health Fair May 14

Resources for Seniors and the Garner Senior Center are sponsoring their 24th annual Senior Health Fair on Wednesday, May 14 from 9 a.m. to noon in the Senior Center gym (205 E. Garner Road). Several free health screenings are being sponsored by area health-care providers. No appointments are necessary. For more information, contact the Senior Center at (919) 779-0122.



Friday Family Flick/Camping Night May 16 at Lake Benson Park

Enjoy "Despicable Me 2" at Lake Benson Park (921 Buffalo Road) on Friday, May 16. The free Family Flick begins at 8:30 p.m. Bring a blanket or chairs. Refreshments will be available. Family camping will follow the movie. Advance registration is required for camping. Register by going to [garnernc.gov/Departments/Parks and Recreation/Default.aspx](http://garnernc.gov/Departments/Parks%20and%20Recreation/Default.aspx) then selecting Outdoor Programs from the Programs pulldown menu, or call (919) 773-4442. A second movie/camping night featuring "Monsters University" will be June 13.



Garner's Annual Memorial Day Ceremony to be Held at Park

Garner's annual Memorial Day ceremony will be held Monday, May 26 at 1:30 p.m. near the Garner Veterans Memorial in Lake Benson Park (921 Buffalo Road). The tentative program includes Mayor Ronnie Williams (speaker); Savannah Richmond (songs); 2012 Miss North Carolina Arlie Honeycutt ("Star Spangled Banner"); Garner Magnet School JROTC (color guard); Tyrone Kiaku, Garner Magnet High School (bugler). More details will be provided as they become available.



Outdoor Concert Series Continues with 40 East May 29

The free Music Off Main Downtown Concert Series has been renamed and rebranded Downtown Sounds: Music on the Lawn. The outdoor concerts are still being held on the GPAC lawn (125 Avery St.) and are still on Thursdays from 6-9 p.m. Remaining shows this season include 40 East on **May 29**, The Central Park Band on **June 12** and Spare Change on **June 26**. As in the past, there will be food and beverage vendors at all of the concerts. Bring your chairs or blankets, but coolers and pets are not allowed. For more information, visit downtowngarner.com.



You can follow GPAC on Twitter (@GPACGarner) and Facebook.



You can follow
Garner PD
on Twitter
(@Garner
Police).



Sidewalk Project Near Completion

The sidewalk project connecting Garner Magnet High School and Vandora Springs Road via Forest Ridge Road and Foxwood Drive is just about complete. The project was identified as a priority by the Police Department during a neighborhood initiative for the area. The Planning Department was able to secure a Community Development Block Grant through Wake County to fund 80 percent of the \$206,000 project. The Town funded an estimated \$72,000 of additional sidewalk work along Vandora Springs Road so that there could be a continuous stretch of sidewalk from Foxwood Drive to the entrance to the Sunset Acres neighborhood at Beichler Road.

Garner's Police Force Reaccredited

The Garner Police Department has earned its seventh accreditation award from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) and formally received its CALEA certificate of advanced meritorious accreditation at the April 22 Town Council meeting.

The meritorious accreditation recognizes agencies for having been accredited for 15 or more continuous years. The Garner Police Department was first accredited under Chief Tom Moss in 1994.

There are currently 629 municipal agencies in the United States out of 14,000 – or 4.5 percent – that have law enforcement accreditation through CALEA. The Garner Police Department is one of 34 municipal law enforcement agencies in North Carolina to be accredited – out of more than 500 in the state.

Dana Clay is the department's



Garner Police Chief Brandon Zuidema (second from right) holds GPD's CALEA meritorious accreditation certificate while Dana Clay displays her certificate of appreciation at the April 22 Town Council meeting. Also pictured are Town Manager Hardin Watkins (left) and CALEA commissioner Hassan Aden, who is Greenville's chief of police.

accreditation specialist and serves as accreditation manager. She was presented with a CALEA certificate of appreciation at the Council meeting.

To earn CALEA reaccreditation, Garner PD had to demonstrate compliance with more than 460 standards. To retain accredited status, the department must submit an annual report to CALEA. Reaccreditation occurs at the end of a three-year cycle, following a successful on-site assessment and hearing before CALEA.

Stevens Award Nominations Due June 15

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2014 James R. Stevens Service to Garner Award and will be accepted through June 15.

Anyone who has made substantial, outstanding contributions to the Town of Garner over a period of years is eligible for the award, now in its 27th year. Emphasis should be placed on service rendered over an extended period of time rather than just what has been done in the preceding 12 months. Preference will be given to nominees with 20-plus years of service. Non-residents of Garner are eligible if the award committee

deems that they meet the necessary criteria. The award also can be awarded posthumously.

Three finalists will be selected by July 15 by a panel of judges that includes Town officials, a Garner Chamber of Commerce representative, a Stevens family member or descendant and other members of the community. The finalists will be contacted and invited to attend the award ceremony, which will be held at the Aug. 19 Town Council meeting.

The recipient will receive an engraved plaque, and an engraved plate bearing his or her name will

be added to the plaque honoring previous winners that is currently displayed at Town Hall.

A nomination form can be found with this [news release](#). Forms also will be available at Town Hall, the Garner Chamber of Commerce, the Wake County Southeast Regional Library, Garner Performing Arts Center and other select locations around town. In addition, a form can be requested by emailing Kimberly Moffett, deputy town clerk for the Town of Garner, at kmoffett@garnernc.gov. For more information, please contact Moffett at (919) 773-4456.